UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

NETpositive FUTURES

WEST MIDLANDS UNIVERSITIES PROCUREMENT GROUP SUPPLIER SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2018

Foreword

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The University of Birmingham is a civic university, rooted locally but with a strong global footprint. Established in 1900 to realise the potential of a progressive city, more than a century later we remain committed to making a difference locally, nationally and globally.

Our mission is to grow intellectual talent and, although our core business relates to the delivery of world-class research and education, our drive to unlock value and make important things happen extends to all areas of our activity.

The Procurement and Insurance Division at the University has spent the past year updating our procurement policies and processes to ensure we deliver excellent practice and achieve both financial and non-financial value in every purchase. Embedding the principles of ethical and sustainable procurement across all our activity has been a key element of our approach.

Central to realising our ambitions are the strong links forged with key organisations across the West Midlands. We understand that partnerships and collaborative relationships are essential to our success: they improve our communities, stimulate innovation, and attract research investment.

The benefits of collaboration in relation to procurement are well-understood: we reduce costs by utilising frameworks established by consortia; we work with innovative partners to share equipment and maximise efficiencies; and we share learning with peers across the sector for mutual benefit.

One of the ways we accomplish this collaborative approach is by working with colleagues from other universities via the West Midlands Universities Procurement Group (WMUPG)[1]. Since its inception in 2014, we have been sharing plans and experiences and looking for opportunities to deliver collective positive impacts.

Each member of the Group is responding to similar challenges and this collective provides an effective way to share learning and develop practical approaches to effective procurement. Our regional focus also provides opportunity to consider how we can collaborate to support regional ambitions and priorities.

The majority of WMUPG members use the N*ETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool* [2] as part of their procurement process *(see Section 3)*. The University of Birmingham Procurement Team utilises the tool and the data it generates to demonstrate progress against sustainable procurement targets and to demonstrate the overall positive impacts of our procurement. Together with our colleagues in the WMUPG we are, however keen to demonstrate how our *collective* use of this tool not only contributes to achieving our own institutional objectives, but through our engagement with the supply chain, significantly contributes to wider regional sustainability priorities.

Publication of this report is intended to demonstrate the collective and positive impacts of our supply chains, highlighting some of the 14,000 actions already undertaken by our suppliers via our supplier engagement initiative. It is also designed to inform and stimulate meaningful and practical regional discourse about sustainability and social value by underlining the significant value of collaboration in making important things happen.

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[1] Aston University, University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University, Coventry University, De Montfort University, Harper Adams University, Keele University, Newman University, University of Staffordshire, Warwick University, University of Wolverhampton, University of Worcester

[2] http://netpositivefutures.co.uk/netpositive-supplier-engagement/

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Section 1:
The West Midlands Universities Procurement Group

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The 12 universities represented by the WMUPG make a significant contribution to the region:

- *We produce over 37,000 graduates each year, who become the workforce for a wide range of manufacturing, professional and creative industries and public services.*

- *57% of our UK-based graduates choose to stay and work in the West Midlands, providing valuable talent and knowledge to a range of industries.*

- *We collectively employ 24,000 people.*

- *We routinely spend around £800 million through our supply chains (non-staff spend), engaging with 2,000 suppliers annually.*

- *Collectively, between 2017 and 2025 we are committed to spending £3.8 billion as part of our capital programmes.*

Whilst a relatively informal group, the WMUPG comprises senior procurement professionals who meet on a quarterly basis to:

- *Share best practice;*

- *Explore partnership opportunities;*

- *Engage with external experts on new and innovative approaches to procurement; and*

- *Consider and agree opportunities to demonstrate our contributions to sustainability and social value.*

Of the 12 members of the Group, 8 are using the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool. This report is based on the shared contribution of these institutions and the leadership of the University of Birmingham in funding this report.

Section 2:
The regional context and sustainability priorities

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Whilst members of the WMUPG seek to further the priorities of the universities they represent, as a collective we also recognise that many of our institutions' sustainability priorities are shared and that our institutional ambitions are set against the joint backdrop of regional sustainability priorities and the global challenges, which we all face and have a responsibility to address.

Building on this concept of "shared challenge" it should also be recognised that sustainability priorities at both a regional and national level have been well-documented and are relatively consistent. Whilst the nuances of the language may differ, the core challenges that face our planet do not. This core set of global issues has been captured in the publication of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[3], which clearly articulate the challenges that can only be resolved through collaborative and/or individual action.

Within the West Midlands, a clear set of regional sustainability priorities has been developed by Sustainability West Midlands[4], which reflects relevant and compelling local concerns (see Table 1). Alongside these we have suggested the SDGs which are most aligned to these regional priorities. Although not an exact science, as with any strategic priorities there will be some overlap and indeed success in one priority area can often have a positive impact on another.

In addition to global, national and regional priorities, each university has its own set of strategic commitments to sustainability or social value, and there are many areas of overlap. For this report these are considered to be shared areas of interest and therefore are overarching priorities for the WMUPG.

Table 1: Sustainability West Midlands' Priorities aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals

WM Priority	Description	Sustainable Development Goals
Jobs	Development and co-ordination of initiatives to stimulate low carbon jobs and skills	• *No Poverty* • *Zero Hunger* • *Quality Education* • *Decent Work and Economic Growth* • *Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure* • *Sustainable Cities and Communities*
Procurement	Public sector sustainable procurement to stimulate innovation and save costs	• *Responsible Consumption and Production*
Waste	Infrastructure for diverting commercial and industrial waste from landfill	• *Climate Action* • *Life on Land*
Buildings	Retrofitting existing housing stock and buildings to improve energy efficiency	• *Affordable and Clean Energy* • *Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure* • *Sustainable Cities and Communities* • *Climate Action*
Transport	Improved low carbon transport choices – flexible working, cycling, walking	• *Good Health and Well-Being* • *Sustainable Cities and Communities* • *Climate Action*
Energy	Decentralised energy networks focused on regeneration areas	• *Affordable and Clean Energy* • *Reduced Inequalities* • *Sustainable Cities and Communities* • *Responsible Consumption and Production*
Environment	Environmental infrastructure to enhance water supply, flood defences and green spaces	• *Clean Water and Sanitation* • *Climate Action* • *Life Below Water* • *Life on Land*
Leadership	Civic and corporate leaders showing that work and lifestyle changes are desirable and realistic	• *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions* • *Partnerships for the Goals*

[3] www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

[4] www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk

Section 3:
Sustainable procurement in higher education

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The profile of sustainable procurement across the Higher Education sector has increased considerably in recent years. The establishment of the Responsible Procurement Group, supported by the Higher Education Procurement Association[5], is driving the national response to sustainability and social value, and the number of procurement teams reporting sustainable procurement activity is continually increasing .

WMUPG comprises institutions large and small, and rural and urban, and as such, the Group has a broad spectrum of procurement resources and challenges. In terms of sustainable procurement however, it is important that we focus on what unites rather than what separates us. For example, we are all required to comply with relevant legislation, including:

- *Social Value Act (2012)*
- *Modern Slavery Act (2015)*
- *Anti-Money Laundering Directive*

These require a response from all procurement professionals within Higher Education and identifying and reducing exposure to risk in relation to the supply chain is common to us all, as is the need to continually demonstrate value for money in a financially constrained environment. The recently established Office for Students[6] is also likely to increase pressure on universities to demonstrate how we respond to customers' [students'] needs and expectations of their universities as socially responsible and globally-focused institutions

Alongside the socio-economic drivers there is the need to respond to a range of environmental challenges, such as those outlined by Sustainability West Midlands and by the environmental and sustainability teams within our institutions. These include, but are not limited to, the need to invest in low carbon estates, to develop sustainable transport networks, to establish and maintain our campuses as bio-diverse ecosystems, and to enhance our energy, waste and water management.

Whilst we acknowledge these challenges, the WMUPG welcomes these drivers as a crucial opportunity to work with our suppliers to manage and influence the development of our supply chains, stimulating innovation and encouraging best practice in sustainable procurement, whilst ensuring rigour and value for money.

[5] www.hepa.ac.uk/Login?p=/resources/responsible-proc
[6] www.officeforstudents.org.uk

Section 4:
Our approach to supplier engagement

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Engaging suppliers on sustainability is a challenge for both private and public-sector organisations. The diverse and global nature of supply chains, together with the need to avoid penalising or burdening suppliers with constant requests for information means we need to ensure that anything we ask for is used within the procurement and contract management processes.

Working with NETpositive Futures , WMUPG members have provided their suppliers with access to an innovative online tool, which helps them to explore sustainability within their business and along their supply chain. Suppliers generate a free sustainability action plan based on the principles of materiality, net-positive sustainability and social value. Supplier plans, and the amalgamated data are used to update procurement process and practice, inform category management, shape contract management discussions, and demonstrate progress against agreed targets. The data is used to shape supplier engagement and (WMUPG) support packages for suppliers, which are based on the evidence collated through their action plans.

This innovative approach to supporting our suppliers:

Is an offer not an ask
Suppliers are offered an opportunity to develop a sustainability action plan that can support their sustainability and enhance the social value of their business.

Focuses on action not policies
Policy does not always lead to practice. We are keen to explore what action suppliers are taking and how they can be supported to do even more.

Generates useful data as a by-product of support
The process of generating an action plan provides relevant information that supports procurement excellence and saves suppliers' time.

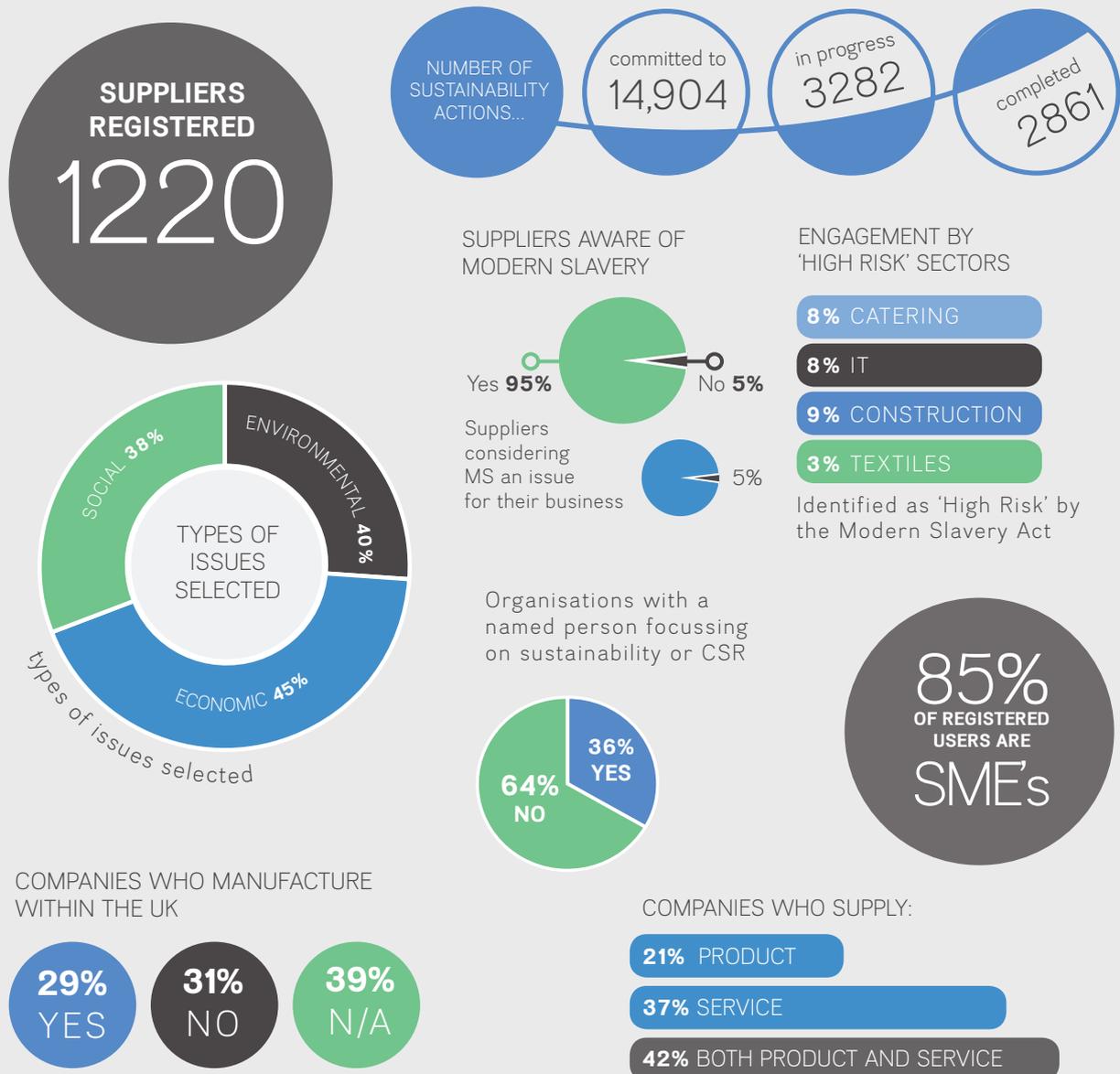### Helps us understand the marketplace
By amalgamating and analysing the data across a specific region or within a specific high-risk category we can focus our engagement activities, offer targeted support and provide valuable guidance. It also helps us to understand and share best practice on sustainability and social value across the wider higher education and procurement sectors (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: WMUPG Amalgamated data

Over the course of the last 18 months the members of the West Midlands Universities Procurement Group have been supporting our suppliers using an online engagement tool.

Working with our partners NETpositive Futures Ltd the tool provides our suppliers with a free action plan based on the latest sustainability thinking. This action plan is used as part of the contract management process.

The tool is also helping to ensure that the priority actions for the West Midlands Universities are being undertaken by suppliers and to monitor their performance. This performance can be tracked at a category level as part of category strategies. Here is a brief overview of the current position of this initiative.

SUPPLIERS REGISTERED
1220

NUMBER OF SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS...

committed to
14,904

in progress
3282

completed
2861

TYPES OF ISSUES SELECTED
types of issues selected

- ENVIRONMENTAL **40%**
- SOCIAL **38%**
- ECONOMIC **45%**

SUPPLIERS AWARE OF MODERN SLAVERY

Yes **95%**   No **5%**

Suppliers considering MS an issue for their business

5%

ENGAGEMENT BY 'HIGH RISK' SECTORS

- **8%** CATERING
- **8%** IT
- **9%** CONSTRUCTION
- **3%** TEXTILES

Identified as 'High Risk' by the Modern Slavery Act

Organisations with a named person focussing on sustainability or CSR

36% YES
64% NO

85%
OF REGISTERED USERS ARE
SME's

COMPANIES WHO MANUFACTURE WITHIN THE UK

29% YES   **31%** NO   **39%** N/A

COMPANIES WHO SUPPLY:

- **21%** PRODUCT
- **37%** SERVICE
- **42%** BOTH PRODUCT AND SERVICE

Section 5:
Which issues are important to our suppliers?

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The data collated through suppliers' action plans provides us with invaluable insights into the priorities of our supply base, together with the sustainability issues and actions that they are tackling or want to address. With this detailed understanding of supplier responses to sustainability we can:

- *Prioritise engagement activities;*

- *Understand where our suppliers might require more targeted support, advice or guidance; and*

- *Identify, exemplify and celebrate innovation and best practice amongst our suppliers.*

As part of the action planning process, suppliers select issues that are pertinent to their business. From a sustainability perspective we are supporting suppliers to undertake a materiality analysis, whereby they identify critical economic, environmental and social issues, which may either reflect a significant impact on their business performance or substantively influence their business decision-making.

Within that context, Table 2 highlights the top sustainability issues identified by suppliers when completing their action plans. Unsurprisingly, the highest priority issues focus on customer engagement and feedback, with both issues recognised by over 75% of suppliers. Other salient issues include compliance (heath and safety, workplace accessibility, etc), explorative and disruptive issues such as new technologies, and further engagement and communication activities.

The least selected issues in Table 3 include the business response to Modern Slavery, supplier development and engagement, and the response required to natural resource consumption and waste production. This selection pattern suggests that suppliers are avoiding some of the issues that they perceive to be either more sensitive (Modern Slavery), challenging (natural resource use), or outside their sphere of control (supply chain management). If this is the case it raises an interesting question as to the support suppliers may require, especially given the importance and attention being focused on these issues by the WMUPG and the wider Higher Education sector.

Table 2: Most selected supplier issues with links to regional priorities

| Issue	Group	Type	Selected	Presented	Selection Rate
Customer feedback is important to us	Social Impacts	Positive	874	1118	78%
We are keen to communicate with our customers	Economic Impacts	Positive	834	1117	75%
We take our Health and Safety responsibilities seriously	Social Impacts	Positive	788	1120	70%
We keep up to date with new technology or approaches to working so we can identify innovation or gains in efficiencies	Economic Impacts	Positive	756	1119	68%
We make work accessible to people from all backgrounds	Social Impacts	Positive	649	1118	58%
We are keen to communicate our environmental commitments	Environmental Impacts	Positive	646	1120	58%
Our goods (or our people) travel	Environmental Impacts	Negative	636	1118	57%

Table 3: Least selected supplier issues with links to regional priorities

Issue	Group	Type	Selected	Presented	Selection Rate
Modern Slavery is an issue for our business	Social Impacts	Negative	56	1150	5%
Our activities have an impact in our immediate locality	Social Impacts	Negative	123	1151	11%
We could do more to improve the formal relationships with our staff	Economic Impacts	Negative	172	1149	15%
We produce commercial waste that is sent to landfill	Environmental Impacts	Negative	188	1151	16%
We should know more about where the things we buy come from and how they are made	Social Impacts	Negative	220	1151	19%
We could do more to maintain good relationships with our suppliers	Economic Impacts	Negative	245	1148	21%
Our business activities use natural resources (energy, water, mined materials, plant or animal products)	Environmental Impacts	Negative	294	1149	26%

Section 6:
Which actions are our suppliers delivering?

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We have 1,220 suppliers, each of whom has developed a sustainability action plan as part of our supplier engagement initiative. They have committed to over 14,000 actions, completed around 3,000 activities, and have made progress on a further 3,000 tasks

It is worth noting that the *NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE)* Tool does not present all suppliers with the same actions; we would not expect different types and sizes of business to all respond to the same issue in the same way, or indeed to face the same issues. The response will always need to be relevant to a supplier's circumstances and therefore where data appears to be absent below, this is because the business size of the supplier means they were not presented with the action in question.

We have
1,220
suppliers

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14,000
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completed around
3,000
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made progress on a further
3,000
tasks
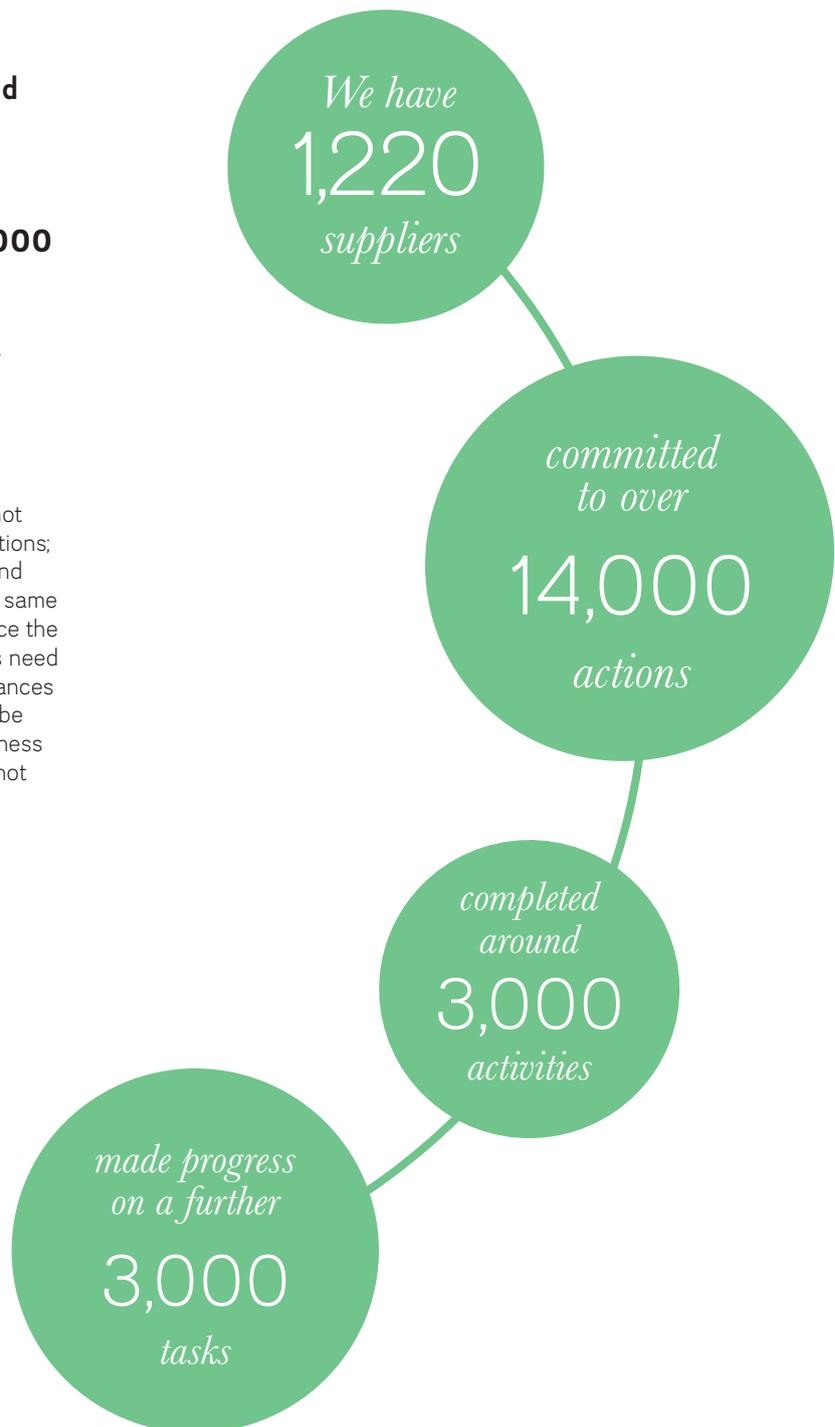
Regional Priority #1: Jobs

The provision of work placement and apprenticeship opportunities is a key priority for the region and a key demonstration of the social value contribution of university suppliers.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. No Poverty

2. Zero Hunger

3. Quality Education

4. Decent Work and Economic Growth

5. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

6. Sustainable Cities and Communities

Action #1:

Join an apprentice scheme
Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	50%	30%	20%	16%
Large	46%	30%	14%	19%
Enterprise	34%	45%	19%	40%

Suppliers to the WMUPG evidently have a high level of commitment to recruiting apprentices, with a minimum of 34% of enterprises and 50% of medium sized businesses committing to join an apprentice scheme. Although the commitment to action is lower amongst large and enterprise businesses, both the completion rate and the provision of evidence is higher than for medium sized business.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We have recruited and trained apprentices every year for four years. We have won awards for our Apprentice programme.*

- *We have 141 of our people on intermediate, advanced and higher-level recruitment apprenticeships, with 23 of those apprentices already being promoted.*

- *We have taken two finance apprentices previously, both of whom have now passed their apprenticeship programme and who continue to work with us as fully-fledged finance team members.*

- *Our apprenticeship scheme has been running for more than 30 years.*

- *We currently have four apprentices – two in the office and two in manufacturing – with another six recently qualified and offered full-time employment.*

Action #2:

Support apprenticeship schemes or disadvantaged groups in your local community

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	54%	18%	20%	10%
Large	53%	23%	12%	12%
Enterprise	38%	26%	17%	28%

The commitment to action is greater than for those committing to simply employ apprentices across all business sizes (Action #1). However, we can also see that the completion rates on average are over 10% less. This suggests that businesses are struggling to find opportunities to engage disadvantaged groups within the community.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We offer employability training, coaching and work placements for young NEETs engaged in The Prince's Trust 'Team' employability programme nationally.*

- *We are proud to offer the 'Meals and More' holiday hunger scheme, which is designed to provide nutritious meals and stimulus for disadvantaged school children.*

- *We work with community groups and our partners to develop opportunities for work experience for young or more challenging groups.*

- *In 2017 we began partnering with an alternative provision free school aimed at 13-16-year olds who need an option other than mainstream schooling.*

- *We participate in school work experience schemes as well as providing jobs for disadvantaged groups and long term unemployed.*

Action #3

Provide short-term work placements

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	58%	14%	26%	17%
Small	51%	28%	20%	18%

Whilst there is a clear commitment to this action there is a significant gap between commitment and delivery, especially within micro businesses. This gap may warrant further exploration, as we know that significant social and economic benefits can be gained for both the employer and those undertaking short-term placements, such as students

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We have provided three work placement opportunities for university students, all of which were paid placements that we extended to provide part-time work alongside their studies.*

- *We support work experience placements for secondary schools and generally have one or two work experience students per annum.*

- *The company has participated in graduate placement programmes such as Santander placement schemes, Modern Apprenticeships, and work placements.*

- *We currently have one apprentice employed by Workspace Technology and often take school and college work experience placements from local schools, colleges and university graduates who wish to take up valuable workplace-based experience.*

- *We currently employ apprentices and support interns for temporary placement.*

Regional Priority #2: Procurement

A commitment to improved procurement practices can have a positive impact on the bottom line of any business. The actions focus on sustainable procurement commitments, although feedback garnered through the *NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool* suggests that the commitment to and delivery of sustainable procurement often leads to, a fuller review of, procurement processes, which leads to overall improvements to procurement practice.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. Responsible Consumption and Production

Action #1:

Make a public commitment to purchasing sustainably

Link to Regional Priorities:
Waste, Energy, Transport, Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	67%	4%	27%	13%
Small	65%	16%	16%	14%
Medium	63%	10%	24%	5%
Large	73%	7%	13%	7%
Enterprise	50%	14%	36%	50%

The commitment to this action is significant across all business sizes. Whilst this is encouraging, we can also see that the completion rate is low, as is the provision of evidence. In many ways the action is relatively easy to deliver; in terms of simply making a public commitment to purchasing sustainability, one might suggest that the low completion demonstrates a lack of confidence as to what this might look like for a business. Given that a commitment to sustainable procurement has impacts across a whole raft of environmental, social and economic impacts this requires further attention.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Where commercial constraints are in place, we plan to offer a 'green' option for any outside services we include in a quote to a client.*

- *We operate a global Green Procurement standard and a Supplier Code of Conduct.*

- *The business is introducing a buying strategy to ensure all materials are traceable to source.*

- *We have a Group Ethical Sourcing Policy which underpins all sourcing decisions taken within the business.*

- *As a company, we are FSC certified and have been for over 10 years.*

Action #2:

Find ways to support local SMEs as part of your procurement processes

Link to Regional Priorities: Jobs, Leadership,

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Large	89%	0%	6%	0%
Enterprise	44%	16%	36%	32%

There is a significant commitment from large businesses to delivering this action but with none of these businesses having delivered against it, the opportunity to support local SMEs is clear. Alongside this there is also a positive response from enterprises and whilst the completion rate is low, progress is clearly being made.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Approximately 95% of our supply chain is classified as SMEs and we report SME spend through various procurement frameworks to our clients.*

- *Much of the fresh meat, poultry and fresh produce on sale through the group are locally sourced and farm assured with full traceability.*

- *Over 80% of our suppliers are local SMEs.*

- *We find that arranging 'meet the buyer' events in the local community helps us to meet these requirements.*

- *We support SMEs in our procurement processes, flexing our 'standard' Supplier Requirements according to the size, scale, risk and complexity of the supplier and/or their contracted services.*

Action #3

Understand the impacts of the products your business buys

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	70%	2%	26%	9%
Small	71%	11%	17%	11%

Understanding the impacts of the products your business buys is a fundamental step to being able to practically buy sustainably. It can however be challenging and time consuming, even for large organisations. There is a significant commitment from small and micro businesses but an implementation gap between commitment and action. Where evidence is provided of action it is often strong, with a commitment to established mechanisms and management systems.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We are developing a product lifecycle tool.*

- *We have approached our suppliers to ask where their products are made and how they are transported.*

- *Our ISO 14001 accredited Environmental Management System ensures that we consider all of the above.*

- *We seek to use local suppliers with good environment credentials and thus minimise the impacts of the supply chain, reducing emissions and the negative impacts of transportation.*

- *We have in place a design process for products that incorporates all areas of sustainability and ensures that our products comply with the requirements for the Nordic Swan Label.*

Regional Priority #3: Waste

We know that waste is a cost. It means that resources, whether time or materials, have not been utilised to their full potential and as a result, impact directly on the bottom line. From a sustainability point-of-view this inefficient use of resource can also have a significant environmental and social impact. The range of actions recorded in the tool reflects the different starting points for businesses to respond to the challenges and opportunities associated with waste management.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. Climate Action

2. Life on Land

Action #1:

Look to remove waste from your business
Link to Regional Priorities: Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Large	55%	14%	27%	9%
Enterprise	46%	15%	31%	36%

Over 50% of large and enterprise businesses have committed to action and whilst completion rates are relatively low and progress rates at only 30%, given both the strategic and long-term nature of managing waste this is understandable. This is supported by the evidence, which focuses on the concept of zero waste, which is encouraging.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We have an ambition to achieve 0% waste to landfill, which we have come very close to in recent years.*

- *Zero waste to landfill will be a key objective within our Sustainability Strategy.*

- *We have in place a comprehensive Waste Management System which includes the separation of waste streams within branches.*

- *We have a waste strategy and regular communication with our employees regarding waste management.*

- *Ultimately, we want our packaging to be recyclable in both material and practice, so that our customers have access to recycling services wherever they choose to dispose of their waste.*

Action #2:

Understand your waste streams

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership, Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	66%	14%	18%	0%
Small	54%	19%	24%	9%
Medium	46%	19%	22%	5%

The more detailed understanding of where waste is in a business (or any system) means we have a better opportunity to manage it, reduce it and save money. Whilst over 50% of all businesses who selected waste as an issue have committed to this action, the low completion rate across all business sizes is disappointing, especially given the benefits to be gained from a comprehensive response.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Within the scope of our ISO14001 we are encouraged to understand our waste and are audited by BSi to confirm we function accordingly.*

- *We regularly audit for our ISO accreditation our waste activity.*

- *We use a carbon footprint tool kit to measure environmental impacts.*

- *We are familiar with the* **wrap**[9] *website, along with other resources that support our aims to reduce our waste streams.*

- *The website "wrap" is currently used by the company and the company has a good understanding of its activities that produce waste.*

Action #3:

Engage employees to reduce waste

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership, Environment, Jobs

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	60%	14%	26%	6%
Small	48%	24%	26%	16%
Medium	49%	16%	35%	11%
Large	41%	32%	27%	14%
Enterprise	36%	21%	36%	36%

Engaging employees to support waste reduction commitments is a key activity for all businesses and, as we can see, commitment levels are high, especially amongst micro businesses. Interestingly, completion rates are high in large businesses, whilst enterprise businesses have provided the most evidence of action. It should be noted that the provision of evidence of action may be directly linked to the level of resource available in large and enterprise organisations.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Each site has a waste management champion who not only monitors but encourages re-use of waste.*

- *Our environmental policy is distributed to all staff and purchasers are trained in sourcing green alternatives wherever possible.*

- *We conduct annual compulsory online training to raise awareness.*

- *We have reduced landfill waste by 50% and now recycle and compost.*

- *We have engaged with staff to harness their enthusiasm and creativity to help reduce waste and negative environmental impacts within day-to-day activity.*

Action #3:

Re-use and Recycle

Link to Regional Priorities:
Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	60%	20%	20%	8%
Small	51%	26%	22%	18%
Medium	49%	19%	22%	3%

The re-use and recycling of materials is, of course, the final step to reduce waste before disposal. It is often a simple action all businesses can take and there is an average commitment rate of 55% between the three business sizes and a combined completion and in-progress rate of around 40%. It would be interesting to know what the barriers are to this increasing, as re-use and recycling have become standard practice for most households. Given regional and national waste reduction targets this may require further investigation and support for suppliers.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *All print cartridges are now recycled. All cardboard and paper is recycled. All customer invoices are held in softcopy.*

- *Our waste disposal company recycles as much as possible at their plant.*

- *All packaging material is recycled and reused where possible.*

- *Reclaimed gas is recovered into a cylinder and gases are often recycled by the gas manufacturers.*

- *We are recycling the majority of our consumables.*

Regional Priority #4: Buildings

It is important for any business to reduce natural resource use within its business processes as part of its commitment to being sustainable and delivering social value. How buildings are managed and maintained can have a significant environmental and social impact.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. *Affordable and Clean Energy*
2. *Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure*
3. *Sustainable Cities and Communities*
4. *Climate Action*

Action #1:

Invest for resource efficiency

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership, Waste, Energy, Environment, Procurement

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	50%	8%	36%	20%
Large	56%	18%	21%	24%
Enterprise	35%	13%	48%	52%

What is immediately striking about the results is the large amount of evidence provided by enterprise businesses on investment for resource efficiency. This may be because they have access to capital to make such long-term investments. The medium sized businesses on the other hand have a greater percentage committed to action, but lower completion and in-progress rates in addition to less evidence of action and therefore impact.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *By promoting "Open Compute" and liquid cooled servers we are offering the most energy-efficient products possible.*

- *We have installed sensor-operated lighting for our office and energy-efficient printers.*

- *By introducing smart meters, we will be able to monitor usages and assess how we can implement changes for improvements.*

- *We are currently looking at the lighting in all of our estate and will look to move to LED lighting reducing our consumption by over 70% where feasible.*

- *We are also looking to install light-saving technology via inactivity sensors to automatically switch off lights when no heat or movement is detected in a certain area and introduce a system that limits the amount of water used in our toilet facilities.*

Action #2:

Adapt your processes to prevent wasting natural resources
Link to Regional Priorities: Waste, Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	49%	14%	34%	17%
Small	52%	15%	30%	18%

A thorough review of the systems and processes within an organisation's buildings can identify more efficient and sustainable ways of doing things. Micro and small businesses have a 50% commitment rate to this action and we can also see from the evidence of impact that some businesses have changed energy supplier or begun to harvest rainwater; simple but effective changes.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Energy supplier is Pure Planet, 100% renewable energy.*

- *We trade electronically where possible, no longer sending out any paper documents, we have also reduced by 50% the number of paper catalogues we print.*

- *We are currently trialling a rainwater harvesting system for vehicle washing.*

- *The company actively seeks to sell techniques and methods of operation that use less natural resources to customers.*

- *I have installed solar panels on my roof.*

Action #3:

Train for resource efficiency
Link to Regional Priorities: Waste, leadership, environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	58%	17%	26%	12%
Small	62%	11%	22%	11%

Small and micro businesses are clearly committed to training and supporting staff but often, as we can see from the low levels of completion against this action, they cannot find the time to be trained. Whilst there is often training available for smaller businesses we should review how often this support is accessed.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *All staff are trained in careful resource use as part of their company induction.*

- *Training given, posters displayed around the building and Green Team encourages staff input.*

- *We have an on-going training programme for all staff.*

- *We are a small team but regularly consider how we can be more efficient with all of our processes and practices.*

- *Our staff are subject matter experts in resource utilisation and update their expertise through their relevant institutions.*

Regional Priority #5:
Transport

All businesses travel, and businesses do not respond well to a message that they should not travel at all. However, the environmental and social impacts of travel and transport are well documented and understood, which is encouraging many businesses to consider when and how they should travel. This is a key issue for universities and the wider region.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. Good Health and Well-Being

2. Sustainable Cities and Communities

3. Climate Action

Action #1:

Understand the travel impacts of your business

Link to Regional Priorities: travel, leadership, environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	59%	16%	22%	11%
Small	59%	12%	23%	9%
Medium	51%	14%	26%	9%
Large	57%	9%	28%	17%
Enterprise	36%	27%	30%	32%

Understanding the travel patterns and impacts of a business is a good first step to reducing impact. As we can see from the evidence of impact there is an increase in the commitment to gathering and understanding travel data. All business sizes except for enterprise have over a 50% commitment rate to this action. SMEs have very similar completion and in-progress rates, whilst the larger and enterprise businesses have provided more evidence of action.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We track all travel and for the first time this financial year will publish carbon figures for travel.*

- *We are restricted to 10 days client site-based travel per annum contributing towards the reduction of our travel impacts.*

- *We capture all travel on our software platform which allows us to track our impact on an annual basis.*

- *We undertake a travel survey every two years to measure the impact of travel.*

- *For our deliveries we use fleet tracking software Telogis to ensure we reduce our impact on the environment.*

Action #2:

Offer Sustainable Travel Options
Link to Regional Priorities: Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	59%	16%	20%	11%
Small	59%	14%	22%	13%
Medium	53%	8%	30%	11%
Large	51%	16%	27%	16%
Enterprise	40%	31%	29%	48%

Travel actions were presented to all sizes of business because, although they might travel less or more frequently and in different ways, there are improvements everyone can make. There are relatively high commitment rates across all business sizes, however completion rates are much higher in enterprise businesses and much lower in medium sized businesses. Similarly, there is a high level of consistency in terms of providing evidence of action across all businesses - apart from enterprise where almost 50% committed to the action provided evidence.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We promote car sharing and have had bike sheds provided at our facility by the council.*
- *We have started to change our vehicle fleet to petrol hybrid vehicles and have installed charging points at our head office.*
- *The Green Travel Plan promotes sustainable alternatives to sole-occupant car-based travel and includes elements such as a car lift-sharing online portal, a tax-efficient cycle-to-work scheme, and on-site bike storage.*
- *We have enrolled in the Bike2Work scheme with good uptake.*
- *Wherever possible we use trains and public transport around the UK rather than hire cars, etc.*

Action #3:

Explore options that reduce the need for business travel
Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership, Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	55%	18%	25%	14%
Small	58%	15%	25%	11%
Medium	53%	11%	33%	15%
Large	49%	17%	28%	19%
Enterprise	34%	25%	26%	48%

This data is encouraging due to the high levels of completion and in-progress rates even amongst our smaller suppliers. If we look at micro businesses, we have the second highest completion rate and a favourably comparable in-progress rate alongside other business sizes. Once again enterprise businesses provide more evidence of action, which has been true across many of the actions in the tool.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Wherever possible, we liaise with clients via digital channels such as email and by using Skype and Google hangouts.*
- *Engineer call routes are planned to minimise inefficiency in both journey times and environmental impact.*
- *We have introduced online conferencing tools for staff members to reduce travel between offices.*
- *A number of instructors have been set-up with home studios to deliver online courses from their home location removing all travel requirements.*
- *Through our Connected Workplace program, we are reducing the need for everyday commuting to work, as well as driving global team collaboration across continents using web-based meeting technology.*

Regional Priority #6: Energy

Demand for goods and services contributes significantly to energy consumption. With rising fuel prices, government targets to increase the use of renewable fuels and increased awareness of the challenges posed by climate change, energy should be a key consideration for any business.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. Affordable and Clean Energy

2. Reduced Inequalities

3. Sustainable Cities and Communities

4. Responsible Consumption and Production

Action #1:

Generate power for your office

Link to Regional Priorities: Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	60%	8%	22%	19%
Large	63%	14%	14%	17%
Enterprise	42%	21%	33%	50%

The commitment to generating energy has been presented as an action for our larger suppliers. As we can see there has been a high level of commitment to this action and, particularly in the case of enterprise businesses, a large amount of evidence has been provided. However, amongst medium and large suppliers there is still a significant implementation gap. It may be worth exploring this further to see if there are either economic or knowledge barriers to taking this action forward.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We are constructing a new UK headquarters building, which will incorporate ground source heat pumps.*

- *Installation of LED panels at our Binley headquarters is saving us £10,000 per year and improving the light levels for our colleagues who work there.*

- *At two of our sites we have installed biomass burners that are fed wood pellets chipped on site from waste wood offcuts.*

- *All waste MFC and other waste product that is safe to burn is burnt in the incinerator and the energy produced heats the warehouse and offices.*

- *The roof of the main office is covered entirely with solar panels to lower the carbon footprint of the building*

Regional Priority #7: Environment

Consideration of the importance of the natural environment, either in terms of its resilience to cope with extremes of weather or as a vital community resource linked to wellbeing is of increasing importance to businesses.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. Clean Water and Sanitation

2. Climate Action

3. Life Below Water

4. Life on Land

Action #1:

Understand your resource use

Link to Regional Priorities: Energy, Environment, Procurement, Buildings, Waste

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	61%	10%	27%	11%
Small	65%	9%	20%	10%

Smaller businesses are clearly committed to this action, perhaps because margins are tight and an obvious money saving opportunity is to reduce resource use. It is particularly interesting that so many suppliers committed to this action have not completed it. It may be that they do not know where to start or need more support or guidance.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We measure our resource use as part of our membership of Oxford's Low Carbon pathfinder programme.*

- *Smart meters installed. Utility bills analysed during Green Team meetings.*

- *We have an aspects and impacts register.*

- *Two independent audits have been undertaken to understand how we use natural resources and how much we use, including recommendations for the reduction of their usage.*

- *Our resource use audit is part of our CSR report*

Action #2:

Measure environmental impacts across your business

Link to Regional Priorities: Environment, Waste, Energy, Transport

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	67%	10%	20%	8%
Small	64%	10%	23%	9%

Formal environmental management systems are one way a supplier can measure and monitor a host of environmental impacts. However, they can be expensive and time consuming for smaller businesses to implement. However, there is a very high commitment to measure environmental impacts. As with many of the commitments, we also see a combined in-progress and completion rate of around 30%, suggesting once again some barrier to completing this essential task.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We have an environmental policy and set out our plans and targets for each year.*

- *Measurements from all operating companies are reported annually and displayed on our website.*

- *We track all waste produced and energy used by the company on a monthly basis.*

- *We hold ISO14001 accreditation.*

- *As part of the Environmental System we have an Impacts and Aspects register. This details the impacts our business activities have on the environment (if any) and what the impacts are.*

- *We measure and monitor our environmental performance setting annual targets for improvement*

Action #3:

Issue a positive environmental policy

Link to Regional Priorities: environment, waste, energy, transport, leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	50%	30%	20%	15%
Small	47%	40%	13%	23%

The high completion rates again this action suggest that many of our smaller suppliers have moved forward on this. Around 50% of suppliers have completed this or are on course to do so. Whilst in some ways this is a simple action it is a strong indicator that smaller businesses are engaged on environmental issues in a positive, pro-active way.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We publish a formal environmental policy to meet the requirements of ISO 14001:2015 and annually review this policy.*

- *We have an environmental policy that complies with all legislation and is regularly reviewed.*

- *Environmental Policy has been updated and a copy of the statement is featured on the office notice board.*

- *Our environmental and sustainability policies are available on our website.*

- *Our environmental policy appears in our Manual and is available on our company server for easy access.*

Action #4:

Communicate sustainability to your customers

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	56%	16%	21%	13%
Large	60%	25%	14%	18%
Enterprise	48%	27%	25%	33%

There is a large increase in the number of larger suppliers being both comfortable and confident in how they communicate their sustainability credentials. This is led, in terms of delivery and provision of evidence, by enterprise businesses. The use of a variety of media from web to LinkedIn to Twitter is providing greater opportunities for our suppliers to tell their story. This data, however does demonstrate the gap between commitment and completion especially in medium sized businesses..

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We publish **LinkedIn** posts on our sustainability activities.*

- *We communicate our Going Green Initiative to our customers in our classrooms and on our learning portal.*

- *Our website is constantly updated with information regarding our activities on sustainability.*

- *Our accreditations appear as footers to our web pages.*

- *To encourage our customers to engage in sustainability we have a large dedicated section on our website detailing recycling and sustainability initiatives as well as eco-friendly products.*

Regional Priority #8: Leadership

All sustainability activities require leadership. This is the priority that underpins all sustainability across the region and beyond. Raising the profile of the importance, and benefits, of considering sustainability is critical to the successful delivery of the regional priorities and the SDGs

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

2. Partnerships for the Goals

Action #1:

Partner with research bodies and universities to lead on innovation for your sector

Link to Regional Priorities: Jobs

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	62%	12%	16%	10%
Large	63%	19%	14%	18%
Enterprise	52%	20%	27%	29%

As we can see there is a very high commitment across all businesses presented with this action. With relatively low completion rates, 20% for enterprise businesses and just over 10% for medium businesses, there is an opportunity to engage the business community further on this action.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Working with laboratories that provide evidence on the effectiveness of our cleaning chemicals.*

- *We work with a limited number of universities who are researching new technology. We facilitate their research by providing products, introducing them to vendors and getting vendor support for new projects.*

- *We have relationships with leading training industry bodies and accreditors and communicate with them on a regular basis to discuss new developments, trends and innovation.*

- *We have a strong track record on this and have been involved in numerous TBS/Innovate UK projects and collaborated with bodies like the UKGBC to develop new approaches. Including the delivery of IMPACT, a lifecycle costing software tool recognised by BREEAM.*

- *We are partnering with universities and research institutions to continuously drive innovation and application of digital solutions for business and society.*

Action #2

Publicly report on your impacts
Link to Regional Priorities: Environment

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Large	64%	19%	10%	14%
Enterprise	43%	35%	20%	32%

We would expect all large organisations to have an on-going commitment to understanding the impacts of their business (both positive and negative) and be publicly reporting on these on an annual basis. Whilst commitment to this action is high, it is worrying to see such a low level of completion and in-progress rates in large businesses. The evidence of action in enterprise businesses, whilst at 32%, is still lower than one might expect given the proliferation of corporate reporting requirements, particularly those enshrined in legislation via the Companies Act (2006).

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Our environmental performance is published through our website each year.*

- *Every year we produce an SD Review and a foundation review publishing our performance. These can be found on our website.*

- *We report our Environmental KPI's on an annual basis and produce a Sustainable Development Review, which is available to all employees via our internal Intranet and this is made available for the public on our website.*

- *Our Corporate Responsibility Report is published within our Annual Report and Accounts which are available on our website.*

- *Copies of our Environmental Management System policy are freely available to the public and other interested bodies. In addition, our annual Sustainability Reports are published on our website.*

Action #3:

Keep up-to-date with new developments within your sector
Link to Regional Priorities: Jobs

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	55%	16%	28%	13%
Small	54%	18%	28%	14%
Medium	47%	23%	27%	18%

Universities are at the forefront of innovation and knowledge transfer and it is therefore important to us to have suppliers that seek to constantly improve their performance and understanding of changing business needs. Across all business sizes there is a strong commitment to keeping up-to-date, coupled with steady completion rates and good in progress numbers. Most of the evidence provided covers technological developments and it is therefore worth exploring the social and cultural developments a little further.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Our IT department is constantly working on developing and improving our system processing.*

- *Our value proposition is to drive efficiency into our customers by promoting new innovations in technology.*

- *As a provider of Software as a Service, keeping up to date with technology and enabling innovation through its use is at the core of the company.*

- *We have been working with our machine manufacturers driving the latest environmental innovations enabling us to offer modern vending machines with high energy efficiency ratings.*

- *Subscriptions in place with various journals and online resources to help maintain knowledge and expertise.*

Action #4:

Designate a Sustainability
Co-ordinator

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Medium	50%	24%	21%	13%
Large	55%	27%	10%	20%
Enterprise	40%	36%	19%	26%

A designated sustainability co-ordinator can help focus some of the environmental and social commitment of the business. In smaller businesses we accept that a full-time post is not always required, as resources may not allow this. It is encouraging to see, however an average of almost 50% commitment to this action and around a 30% completion rate across all business sizes. As we can see from the evidence, businesses have differing titles for the post, but the focus of the role is often very similar.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We have a dedicated Environmental Officer.*

- *We are currently reviewing the need for a dedicated resource to cover CSR - likely to be our operations Director.*

- *We have a Safety, Health, Environmental and Quality Manager who is responsible for developing our company's environmental management approach and who enhances our sustainability.*

- *We have appointed a Head of Sustainable Development with direct responsibility for delivering our sustainability strategy, reporting directly to our People and Sustainability Director.*

- *All aspects of Environmental impact and CSR are overseen by the Technical, Risk and Compliance Director, who sits on the company Board.*

Regional Priority #9: Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery is not an explicit, stated priority of Sustainability West Midlands but is nonetheless worthy of inclusion. As we observed from the number of businesses selecting Modern Slavery as an issue for their business (see Section 5), there is clearly still some uncertainty around the subject. This may be because the legislation is focussed on larger businesses. However, we know that, as larger businesses make progress, the impact will be felt through the supply chain and ultimately SMEs will come under significant scrutiny. We have reflected this long-term trend by presenting all actions related to this issue to all business sizes. It is the only issue in the tool where we do this, but this reflects the importance and long term significance of this issue for SMEs.

Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. *No Poverty*
2. *Gender Equality*
3. *Reduced Inequalities*
4. *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions*

Action #1:

Publish your 'Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement'

Link to Regional Priorities: Jobs, leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	75%	13%	13%	6%
Small	71%	14%	14%	7%
Medium	60%	27%	13%	27%
Large	40%	30%	30%	30%
Enterprise	30%	67%	22%	78%

The Modern Slavery Act (2015) requires organisations with a turnover of greater than £36 million to produce a public statement of commitment to responding to the challenges of Modern Slavery. However, as previously indicated, businesses of all sizes are taking the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to responding to this issue. It is clear that high levels of smaller businesses are committed to this action and whilst completion rates are lower, it is a positive move in the right direction.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Our Modern Slavery statement is available on our website.*
- *The MS statement now available on our website.*
- *Our statement has been published.*
- *A copy of the Statement is ready to be approved by the Board.*
- *We have had a policy since introduction of the Modern Slavery Act. The policy is linked to the new website.*

Action #2:

Provide training for staff on Modern Slavery

Link to Regional Priorities: Jobs, Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	56%	25%	13%	6%
Small	71%	21%	7%	14%
Medium	60%	13%	20%	20%
Large	60%	0%	30%	20%
Enterprise	22%	11%	44%	56%

Except for enterprise businesses, over 56% of other businesses presented with this action selected it and whilst completion rates vary, with large businesses on 0%, there is good progress being made amongst SMEs. Given the raft of free training available on this subject we expect to see completion rates in this area continue to grow.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We have issued both written and verbal advice to our engineers.*

- *We have developed a training course for all staff, which will be rolled out this year. We have also collaborated with Stronger Together and the Supply Chain Sustainability School to develop workshop training for our people and our supply chain partners.*

- *The policy has been communicated to all staff; with additional training for those involved in procurement.*

- *Senior staff have received training on identification and the signs of slavery and human trafficking.*

- *All staff are currently undertaking a training course on anti-slavery.*

Action #3:

Develop a code of conduct which prohibits the use of forced or trafficked labour

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	63%	31%	0%	6%
Small	64%	21%	14%	14%
Medium	60%	33%	7%	27%
Large	40%	20%	30%	30%
Enterprise	11%	67%	22%	78%

Commitment and completion rates for those who selected this action are relatively high. As we can see, although many SMEs may not be covered by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, there is still a significant percentage committed to responding with a code of conduct. This may reflect many businesses both future-proofing themselves from the inevitable questions they will receive or simply taking the opportunity to promote the ethical nature of their business. This is supported by some of the evidence below.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *Our Supplier Code of Conduct is now finalised. A copy can be provided if required.*

- *A copy of our Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy is available on-line.*

- *We have a Modern Slavery and ethical trading policy.*

- *While we are not legislatively bound by the Modern Slavery Act given our turnover level, we take this extremely seriously. We have our own Anti-Slavery policy which is strictly followed.*

- *We have a Board statement outlining our intent to eliminate any potential for Modern Slavery within our extended network.*

Action #4:

Engage with your suppliers on Modern Slavery

Link to Regional Priorities: Leadership

Business Size	Committed To Action	Completion Rate	In Progress Rate	Evidence Of Action
Micro	63%	19%	13%	6%
Small	71%	21%	7%	14%
Medium	60%	13%	20%	20%
Large	40%	20%	20%	20%
Enterprise	11%	33%	33%	67%

We reflected within *Priority 2*: Procurement the challenge of supplier engagement for many businesses. Given this challenge, completion rates of between 13% and 33% represent a significant commitment by all business sizes to respond to this agenda. As expected the enterprise businesses lead in terms of completion and in progress rates in addition to evidence of action, however this should be expected given the legislative drivers. The commitment by SMEs should be recognised and further supported.

Suppliers' evidence of impact:

- *We ask all our coffee growers to sign up to the Code of Conduct.*

- *This year we are running workshops for all our preferred suppliers on Modern Slavery.*

- *We have developed a statement, which is available on our website and are now working on a risk assessment framework to identify action areas within our supply base.*

- *All new suppliers have to confirm their activities to comply with the Modern Slavery Act and sign a statement before approval will be granted.*

- *We ask our suppliers to complete a Modern Slavery statement.*

Section 7:
How do we build on our supplier engagement to enhance sustainability and social value?

— — —

This report is a significant step towards demonstrating how we can use supplier data to drive evidence-based engagement and encourage supplier-led innovation and culture change. It also provides a platform for us to continue demonstrating the collective impact of the West Midlands University Procurement Group.

We have examined the data within the context of the priority areas identified by *Sustainability West Midlands,* which helps us to understand where and how our suppliers contribute to these priorities, providing evidence of action and impact and demonstrating how the Higher Education sector is contributing to and supporting the region.

By supporting over 1,200 suppliers to develop their sustainability action plans, we can gather data that allows us to not only understand the contribution of our suppliers, but better target our engagement and supplier development activities to encourage their greater commitment to sustainability and social value.

We have seen throughout this report that, whilst there is a high-level commitment to action amongst our suppliers, we often see an implementation gap. Understanding where this gap occurs and exploring how we might collectively better support local businesses to move forward on these commitments will improve the sustainability and social value performance of the region as a whole.

To that end, rather than invest speculatively in support packages for our suppliers, we will directly respond to our suppliers' requirements by further developing our evidence-based engagement initiative and providing advice and guidance that reflects genuine need. In addition to continuing to provide the free action planning tool, specifically we will focus on helping suppliers to:

1. *Find ways to engage with disadvantaged groups in the local community;*
2. *Offer more short-term work placements;*
3. *Enact their public commitment to purchasing sustainably;*
4. *Understand the impacts of their supply chain;*
5. *Understand their waste streams;*
6. *Understand and overcome the barriers to re-use and recycling;*
7. *Review the training opportunities available on resource efficiency;*
8. *Generate/secure low-carbon power for their office environments;*
9. *Understand, record and translate their resource use;*
10. *Understand and overcome the barriers to measuring their environmental impacts;*
11. *Better communicate sustainability to their customers;*
12. *Find ways to partner with research organisations to lead on innovation for their sector;*
13. *Be compliant with legislative reporting requirements;*
14. *Explore social and cultural developments within their sectors; and*
15. *Engage with their supply chain on addressing Modern Slavery.*

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